

Governor's Alaska Council on Emergency Medical Services

MINUTES – February 5, 2010

State of Alaska, EMS Office

410 Willoughby Ave.

Juneau, Alaska

ATTENDANCE:

Council Members:

David Hull	Don Hudson	Soren Threadgill	Roy Sursa
John Dickens	Ron Bowers	Karen O'Neill	Mary Leemhuis

Absent Council Members:

Danita Koehler (excused)

Liaison Council Members:

BJ Coopes	Ken Zafren (phone)	Cindy Cashen (phone)	Frank Sacco
Andy Jones (new)	Mike Motti (new)		

Regional Directors and EMS Coordinators:

Sue Heck, Southern Region EMS Council, Inc.	Agnes Jack, Maniilaq EMS
Jane Schultz, Kenai Peninsula EMS Coordinator/SREMSC	Brian Lefferts, Yukon Kuskokwim
Mike Motti, Southeast Regional Health Corporation	Jane Schultz
David Potashnick, North Slope Borough Fire Department	
Judd Bronteson, Kodiak Subarea EMS Coordinator	
Skip Richards, Prince William Sound Subarea Coordinator	

Visitors:

Shelley Deering	Dr. Ward Hurlburt	Jason Hooley	Senator Coghill
Craig Campbell	William H. Hogan		

State Staff:

Sally Abbott, Section Chief	Terry Olliff, EMS Unit Manager
Nancy Barros, ACEMS support staff	Lee Parham, EMS Training Coordinator
Julie Rabeau, Trauma Manager	Judy Neary, Certification Coordinator
Raj Maskay, EMSC Coordinator	

Call to order:

David Hull, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions:

David Hull welcomed everyone to the council meeting.

- Reviewed Code Blue Resolution, which Ron Bowers created. All council members and regional members gave input. Nancy Barros will make adjustments and bring back copies of signed originals so each one can have a few to handout.

Soren Threadgill made a motion to accept the Code Blue Resolution, with adjustments.

Karen O'Neill seconded the motion.

Dave Hull discussed the resolution, reviewed the additional changes.

Don Hudson made the motion to accept the Code Blue Resolution with the added changes.

Mary Leemhuis seconded the motion.

Motion voted/approved.

- Announced that February 7 – 13 is Burn Awareness Week.

Dave Hull asked if the agenda needed adjusting.

Dave Potashnick brought up the training committee's decision to "not approve" the pediatric training. He shared the training committee decided that if each "special" interest group came forward with their own significant training that it would become very cumbersome. Dave reinforced the training committee believed that pediatric training is very important but should not be "mandatory" as the percentage of CME required for a paramedic is so much less than EMT's. There also was a concern that in the small communities the EMT's might not be able to find pediatric training to fulfill their annual CME requirement.

B.J. Coopes stated that they could receive the pediatric training on-line. She reminded the group that CPR for infants or children would qualify.

Mary Leemhuis asked if "we are specifying pediatric training in general or is it a specific course?"

Ron Bowers confirmed that the training can be any pediatric training, even electronically, through the internet.

B.J. Coopes reminded the group that this "requirement" is a performance measure for the EMSC grant. If 30% of treatment is pediatric related why not a small percentage of CME's be pediatric related?

Roy Sursa stated that he would like to see six more hours mandated for training.

Dave Potashnick stated that he was not opposed to pediatric training, nor was the training committee. A potential problem may be created if "mandated" training be enforced because of each grant request.

Karen O'Neill stated we should not do this training because it is a grant requirement but because it is the right thing to do. This is a young state. If we required pediatric training, we will figure out how to find pediatric training.

Dave Hull asked Terry Olliff how to make that regulation change.

Terry Olliff stated that ultimately the state office will decide. He will look for direction. Do not feel mandating is the way to go. We might say, "It is very important piece."

Bobbi Leichty asked, "How can you tell if pediatric issues really are the issue? As we have no real data to support that fact."

Mike Motti disagreed, that some of the trauma data is broken out to age groups. The real question is if we want to change regulations and mandate the training.

Dave Potashnick stated the training committee may be more comfortable taking this issue more seriously if the request was not tied to a grant requirement, but more of doing the right thing.

Dan Johnson stated that pediatric training is important. The logistical issues of finding this specific training in the rural and remote areas of Alaska is the problem. Perhaps offering

pediatric training on CD's? Tracking data is a function of the state. Dan suggested peds training be "suggested" or "recommended" – not mandated.

B.J. Coopes stated she wants the state to be more engaged with pediatric issues/training and likes the idea of offering this training through CD's.

Dave Hull stated the suggested and recommended training for pediatric issues is probably already in place.

Terry Olliff said he agreed with both, within a two-year period. He suggested going back to the grant and seeing what it states. He said we could say the state is showing progress and yes, there is a program in the state.

Dave Hull asked for a motion, that the motion needs to be rescinded from the last ACEMS meeting in October 2009.

Mary Leemhuis made a motion for ACEMS to rescind the motion at the last meeting October 2, 2009 to mandate pediatric training and to change to ACEMS strongly encourages EMT's to have pediatric training.

Dave Potashnick requested a friendly amendment for the training committee with the State EMS office to make a Blueprint of suggested guidelines and recommend curriculum, re-clarify hours of training and review mandated training as related to domestic violence and pediatric training.

Soren Threadgill seconded the motion.

All approved/motion carried.

ACTION ITEM: write a letter to EMSC, which shows ACEMS recommends and suggests pediatric training for EMT's when and where possible.

Dave Hull reported the ACEMS has had some logistical issues related to membership and being out of compliance. Introduced Jason Hooley as the Director of Boards and Commissions.

Governor's Office of Boards & Commissions Report:

Jason Hooley, Director of B&C thanked the council for the invitation to attend the ACEMS meeting and recognized the good work the council provides. Jason was introduced to each council member, liaison member and regional directors. Jason reviewed the state statutes and regulations as related to ACEMS.

- Two consumer positions need to be reviewed as the definition of "consumer" is anyone with no health care, EMS or related experience. Ron Bowers does not meet the criteria of "consumer" because he is an active EMS person.
- The three consumer positions must also represent three different judicial districts. Since we have, only one consumer position filled, by Ron Bowers, that is not a problem, however it was a problem before Steve O'Connor resigned.
- The "mistake" was not anything this council has done or not done. However, it needs to be fixed.
- Members are not removed abruptly, however, since it is the Governor's council the members serve at his will.

- If the council considers adding new positions by statute, you may want to contact a friendly legislative person like Coto (House Majority) Bettye Davis or Coghill. It is possible to attach to the existing trauma bill.
- If the council expects to get the council additional members or to change membership, you may want to consider broadening the descriptions or requirements (like judicial districts).

Dave Hull asked if there is a problem if one council member supervises another council member from the same organization. Would that have an effect on appointments?

Jason Hooley stated that he saw no regulations, which state that might be an issue. He reminded the council that the Governor wants diverse appointments and he wants people of passion and action to serve on all the Boards and Commissions to include ACEMS.

Nancy Barros asked if ACEMS could see the interested applicants before they go to the Governor for final appointment?

Jason Hooley said he could make sure that happens. He shared the following people who have shown an interest;

- Shelley Deering – Juneau, emergency airlift/Bartlett Regional Hospital
- Mari-Margaret Tydingco – Sitka, hospital/SERRC/Occupational Therapy/EMT
- Elke Saunders – Anchorage, breastfeeding educator/childbirth educator/health educator
- Jeanna Moulter – Anchorage, trauma educator/Providence employee

John Dickens asked if there is a conflict serving on ACEMS if also serving on another board?

John shared he serves on the Alaska Air Carriers Association organization.

Dan Johnson stated as long as that association was disclosed is the bigger issue.

Dave Hull stated this was not an issue.

BJ Coopes asked why she has not been appointed as an ACEMS member as she has tried to be on this council before Danita Koehler was appointed.

Jason Hooley did not know the answer because it was before his time. He surmised it might have been because Danita was outside of Anchorage and the geographic diversity may have been a factor.

Membership & By Laws Committee Report:

Ron Bowers discussed how to change the labels of the council members. Should the original number of eleven be increased to thirteen? To include a trauma surgeon and a pediatric position.

Dave Hull shared he appointed Danita Koehler, ACEMS voting member to be on EMSC sub committee to meet the grant requirements and when we can get BJ Coopes on as a voting member she will take that place.

Dan Johnson suggest that council members be represented geographically or highway systems or non-highway systems.

Roy Sursa reminded the council that Jason Hooley had cautioned the group to broaden the member requirements not tighten them.

Lt. Governor Craig Campbell Report:

Dave Hull welcomed the Lt. Governor, introduced him to the EMS Wheel (how EMS works throughout the State), gave group introductions to include the Wall of Knowledge.

The Lt. Governor shared his background and history, formally Commissioner of Homeland Security. There is great value in information gleaned from those positions. Communication is a two-way interaction and extremely important. As the ACEMS council and if you want to be in an advisory council, that does the ground work and to provide better results, HOW CAN I HELP? Lt. Governor asked how he can help this council to be a part of government before and during the planning, not confrontational or last minute input, but integrated into the process? How can we get better results? Asked what the Governor had shared.

Dave Hull shared that Code Blue has been cut and how can he help to support getting it back in the budget?

Lt. Governor suggested that **Donnie Olson/staff, Senator Hoffman or Popin** may be able to give friendly support. Asked what the Governor's opinion was on this issue. Reminded the group that time was of essence because the legislature is in a short session.

Dave Hull shared that the Governor saw no reason to NOT support Code Blue but be sure that the Commissioner agrees with the project. Governor Parnell stated he would not cut Code Blue, if the Commissioner was in favor of the project.

John Dickens asked if all of Alaska could have access to 911. It is inexcusable that in 2010 to not have 911 access to all of Alaska.

The Lt. Governor said he thought it was being done three years ago, from the Commission of DMVA. We, as a state (Commission of Administration) have the ability; we do not have the will. There is still resistance in State government.

Action item: Letter to Dept of Administration/Lt. Gov. /Governor to request 911 access to all of Alaska.

Dave Hull stated the second big concern is the cut of funds for emergency communications for the rural communities – the Legacy system.

Lt. Governor asked why are we keeping the Legacy system alive? Why not move to a higher level of technology?

Response was that the system is not an old system, but there is a need to meet 2010 requirements. Do not continue the use of ALMR. The ALMR does not include capabilities of paging – more radios must be purchased for the system to function correctly. Lt. Governor said this has been an issue with him for many years and sees no reason to go backwards with technology, but to move forward. Why are we keeping this system alive? Are we upgrading to new technology like P-25? ALMR is very expensive – it was good for its original purpose. There still remains resistance in State government to make the needed changes.

Dave Potashnick said he was happy to hear that the Lt. Governor recognized the limitations of ALMR and thanked him for the support he was offering.

Oxygen Transport Issue

Ron Bowers brought up the oxygen transport issue to the Lt. Governor asking him to understand how critical this is becoming.

Don Hudson gave an explanation of how and who he had connected with to research this issue. He stated he had been from the FAA to the United Nations and still there remains an inability to find a common ground or decent reason to allow a variance for Alaska. Alaska has never had a crash or incident involving an oxygen bottle. Not sure, of action – next 30 days will tell the outcome.

Dr. O'Neill stated Nome has had to fly kids into Anchorage for dental care because of this issue. Dave Potashnick stated the North Slope Borough cannot even send the empty bottles back as they must also be transported in the super boxes.

Ron Bowes asked if the Air National Guard can help. What about sending oxygen transport bottles on the Iditarod trail to show Alaskans can get their oxygen that way?

Interior EMS Region Report

Dan Johnson gave his report:

- Major improvement to air handling system within the building.
- Confident that Code Blue will be restored
 - 100% complete working on phase VI
 - One project remaining phase VII
 - One project remaining phase VIII
 - 33 communities in region benefitted
- New FTE – Velma Vinton Rural Coordinator/EMS Liaison
- Advise EMS Board to City Manager [REDACTED] ?
- 26 certified services
 - 21 Ground vehicles
 - 14 non-certified services (5 vehicles)
 - 9 fire-based
- Annual symposium will be March 24 to 27, 2010
 - About 93 people attended last year

DATA project

Mandated requirements from the State. Will use existing funds to help fund FTE. All rural on highway on AUROA.
 13 services participating in AUROA
 Fairbanks not on system
 Motivated to make it work

Southern EMS Region Report

Sue Hecks gave report:

- 9 sub-region coordinators, six sub regions get grants
- 1084 EMT I
- 500 EMT II
- 516 EMT III
- 272 paramedics
- 2,372 total responders

- No accurate count on ETT providers – no data base
- Staffing changes – increased depth of knowledge
 - New Admin Assistant
 - Gregory _____, Resource Coordinator
 - Nadine _____, American Heart Support
- Over 200 instructors
- EMS symposium
 - Thanks to Lee Parham and Nancy Barros for EMS State staff support
 - Good results even though it seemed everything was late
 - Skills competition participation doubled
 - Increase of registration by 32 % (427 participants)
- Introducing new program – Pet First Aid, especially during a disaster, now have two animal manikins
- Recruitment and retention remain an issue
 - Sub committee formed
 - Created a regional award
 - Management development program guideline will be on web site soon
- AUORA
 - Need data
 - Eligibility tied to data
 - Develop new paper survey
 - 24 site visits to communities
 - Trying to bring in compliance
 - Jane Schultz working on
 - Updated run sheet
 - Working on data elements
- Help responders with EMS education
 - Providing scholarships – increase to \$500
 - Mini grants awarded for whatever is needed. Awarded 21, criteria I, II??
- Comfort One
 - 321 packets sent out
 - 14 locations
 - 134 people signed
- Upgraded computer system
- Brian Webb won moulage – got award. Competition will be open statewide
- Resources provided within region and also traveled to Nome and Bethel to prod services/resources needed.

Southeast Region Report

Bobbi Leichthy reported:

- State EMS office cannot provide numbers/data. We need data
- 40 services in SE

- 4 air medevacs (1 Coast Guard)
- 28 EMS based services.
- Support approx. 350 volunteers
- Met with Sally Abbott, assured that EMS was not a step child; also please that Sally has medical background
- Lost two significant contributors in the region – one from MS, one from pancreatic cancer.
- Municipal Medical Response System (MMRS) proposal encompasses various municipalities, opportunity to work with fire chiefs in community. Attempted to place dispatch training and disaster training.
- New Prince of Whales Coordinator position – lives in Thorn Bay, travels to all communities and establishing training schedule.
- Working with medical directors to revise standardized orders.
- 8 active communities not accessible by road system.
- Cardiac Resuscitation Academy in Seattle – shows 3% survivors' ; 46% survivors.
- SEREMS symposium April 23 – 24 in Juneau.
 - o Bringing up Dr. Copas from Seattle to reproduce a “mini” cardiac resuscitation academy.
 - EMT I owns the call – change in culture
 - o Rural avalanche 2-day planned
 - o ICS training – drill
 - o Suicide in your town
 - o EMS Combat
- Data collection important – 25% of training coordinators time devoted to data.

North Slope Borough EMS Region Report:

Dave Potashnick reported the following:

- Training continues
- Provide service to other areas as needed
- Struggling with budget issues
- Call volume being evaluated
 - o 3,000 responses this past year
 - o Most of the responses are outside of the typical 8 to 5 day hours
 - o 142 volunteers
 - o 33% of call peds
 - o 41% are 51 years old or older
- 8 services
 - o 1 certified ground ambulance
 - o 1 air service
 - o 100% fire based
- Medevac service – carrying oxygen is a non-issue

Senator Coghill Report:

Senator Coghill reported on the status of the Trauma Bill (SB168/169). He stated the House and the Senate will have hearings on both bills (Senate at 3 P.M. on 8th; House at 1:30 P.M.) Bob Herrin and Wes Tell (House-side) should be supportive. The question is should we send an appropriation or fiscal note – this will occur in the Finance Committee. If it becomes an appropriation, it would become regulatory authority to DHSS or would it be clearer on statute authority? Most members of the legislature are familiar with this bill – we have many testimonies regarding the “need.” So far, there have been no negative comments heard of concern. Whichever version is passed first it will be taken up by the other body. It takes 45 days to get his passed/into law. EMS is a well-kept secret among the legislature. Baby steps first – this will be viewed as a new initiative in the Finance Committee.

The Governor puts forth a conservative budget, which allows the legislature to place items of importance to them back in the budget.

Commissioner Hogan Report:

The Administration has taken a stand on the importance of ACEMS. DHSS is in front of one or more committees every morning at 8 a.m. x 3 weeks to defend the budget. The budget booklet is approximately 400 pages for 2011. DHSS has a huge responsibility and one service or another touches every individual/family in Alaska and every conceivable service imaginable. We have many partners.

Recognizes the problems and need for changes within the department directly affecting EMS and Injury Prevention. Action is being taken to be more responsive to our customers. The Department is committed to EMS and ACEMS – it will require teamwork.

It is good to follow-up with the Trauma Bill. Senator Coghill is a strong champion on both sides of the legislature. This remains a carrot or stick discussion. Approximately 80% of ED visits are uncompensated financially.

Dave Hull stated that ACEMS recommends the carrot approach.

The oxygen transport issue was explained to the Commissioner by Dr. Hudson.

Commission asked for more information and expressed thanks for the good work ACEMS and EMS does for the state.

Maniilaq Association EMS Report:

Aggie Jack reported they have no medevac staff, not currently transporting patients by air. Program being moved to hospital – no phone, no computer.

Hired two trainers – ACLS, PALS instructor. Teaching EMT III classes at Firehouse. Two houses burned on first day of training, CPR classes. Hope to increase training courses.

1,000 ground transports; approximately 600 air prior to Guardian contract/take over. Keep a plane in Kotzebue. Data collection is important.

YKHC EMS Report:

Brian Lefferts reported an update on Code Blue; 46 oxygen concentrators purchased for clinics – all have been delivered. CHAP training program on high flow oxygen concentrators. Standardizing CHAP manual – written protocols. Meetings in process. Injury prevention – remodel of safety shop. FTE currently – isolation, safety, injury prevention. Injury prevention items are sold at cost – public willing to pay at cost amount. Behavioral health program working with ANTHC – suicide prevention training course planned for next month.

Regional Directors & Coordinators Report:

Sue Hecks reported the results of their meeting February 1 & 2 with a list of priorities.

Code Blue strategies. Steering committee meeting will be held in Anchorage on February 23 – 24. Dividing up the pot of money. Updated brochure and printed for handout. Tables placed between the House and the Senate rooms to take BP's – take the opportunity for interactions. EMSC discussion – add EMS regional manager to sit on training committee and who could serve as direct liaison to state committee.

EMS regulations – state website is to have area for comments. No area to date. Website critical need for accuracy and update. Direct conduit for communication and feedback. Asked state to address need for bullets – specific issues EMS regulations updates and workshops. SREMS – Feb. 17 workshop. Unsure about teleconference capabilities. Regulations workshop to be determined in other areas of the state.

Priority List:

1. AURORA data collection – State invested money in this, training software issues, needs to focus on ground/air services initially. First responders bring in at later time. Four hundred dollars per computer license annually. Request to ACEMS to make recommendations to have data coordinator position.
2. Website – needs to be updated & cleaned up. Request ACEMS send letter to Commissioner Hogan
3. EMS regulations – need to be updated so that skill sheet can be updated. Same timeline – regulations workshop will receive input for the regs update through end of May. Regs to be written over summer and sent out for comment. AG input/review. Policy manual to be updated.
4. Code Blue
5. Certification process/EMS office/streamline
6. EMS education agenda
7. Name of section
8. EMS staff support
9. Recruitment/retention – directly related to _____
10. Feedback point outcomes
11. Medical Director support
12. Grants – logic model training – RFP process discussed. Questions asked and answered. RFP for EMS grants (non-competitive) will be coming out in February. Line item budget from last year is present – no changes.
13. Oxygen transport issue

14. Grant payments timely
15. QI/QA

Air Medical Services Task Group Report:

Dave Potashnick reported that the oxygen transport issue was not an issue for air medical transport – as they can transport oxygen. The negative outcomes will be felt by the rural and remote health care clinics – not the emergency transporters. This issue will not be a further point of discussion with this task group.

Department of Transportation Report:

Cindy Cashen supplied a handout and reported:

- Projects federally funded (traffic fatalities and traffic injury data). Goal – cut fatalities and injuries by one third by 2017. Injury related projects – advisory group established to look at outcomes (ATR data, outcomes data, and emergency room data). Software link (Alaska Traffic – NHTSA). Preparing single portal data to be kept. Has to be related to traffic on road system. Alaska Traffic Records Coordinating Committee.
- American Red Cross of Alaska; training kids in first aid. Trained nine youth part-time. Tried in the past, not successful. Currently it is working in southeast.
- SEARHC – youth first responders (first aid classes). Hope to be supported by other agencies as well.
- Alaska Injury Prevention Safety grant – statewide media messages. TV, radio and schools. February 17th jeopardy type show at five high schools in Anchorage.
- Over 350 booster seats purchased through Toys R Us. Booster seats distributed; training conducted; agencies (daycare & schools). Buckle up license plates were sent out. Texting ads out today.
- Child motor vehicle training – spreading importance of appropriate child restraint certification courses.

Soren Threadgill brought up HB077, “an act allowing certain public employees to take leave without pay to volunteer with the American Red Cross in a disaster.” Clarification was made that this bill is only for State of Alaska employees and only to attend to disasters in Alaska.

Soren Threadgill made a motion for ACEMS to write a letter in support of this bill.

Don Hudson seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

ACTION ITEM: Letter from ACEMS to Representative Millett to support this bill.

Reviewed Action Items:

ACTION ITEM: Special Committee formed, Roy Sursa to Chair to review and make recommendations regarding State Office certification application process.

ACTION ITEM: Letter to Commissioner Hogan to request updated EMS website support.

ACTION ITEM: Letter to Commissioner Hogan to request a specific person for data management (AURORA) for EMS office. Sue Hecks will help draft letter.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

NEXT meeting: October 7 to 8, 2010, Anchorage, AK